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TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [HA](#) [TD](#)
SUBJECT: TFHA01: DEMARCHE DELIVERED IN TRINIDAD ON HAITI AID

REF: SECSTATE 04854; PORT OF SPAIN 30

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY. Per reftel, Charge met several MFA directors and staff to thank the GOTT for its pledge of financial assistance to Haiti (ref B) and to discuss various aspects of disaster relief efforts. We were informed that the GOTT has no unanswered offers of assistance pending with the USG, but remains concerned about an aviation official presumed missing in the Hotel Montana rubble. The MFA CARICOM Director reiterated that GOTT relief efforts are being coordinated through CARICOM. We also shared that two of our locally engaged staff (LES) who volunteered to help with the Haiti relief effort have been dispatched to the theater, and we were told the GOTT would like to coordinate with the USG on mid to long-range rebuilding priorities. END SUMMARY.

CARICOM COORDINATION

¶2. (SBU) Charge and Poloff met January 20 with GOTT MFA Director of Multilateral Affairs Margaret King-Rousseau and Director of CARICOM Affairs Susan Gordon, as well as Haiti Desk Officer Theresa Noel-Belasco and several others in the Multilateral Affairs Division. Gordon reiterated that the GOTT disaster response for Haiti is being coordinated through CARICOM (ref B). She told us that CARICOM divides lead responsibility for disaster relief and emergency response between Jamaica and Trinidad, according to whether incidents occur in the north or south Caribbean, respectively. Gordon said CARICOM member contributions of goods should be forwarded to Jamaica for onward, consolidated delivery to Haiti, and that financial support would be routed through Barbados. Gordon also stated that GOTT's Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) is coordinating NGO assistance to Haiti from across Trinidad and Tobago.

¶3. (SBU) Gordon told us that the GOTT has not yet received an assessment from the Regional Security System (RSS) team who departed for Haiti Jan 14 and offered no indication of whether GOTT troops would yet be offered for deployment to Haiti (ref B). She stressed that the Jamaican Defense Force (JDF) remained best-suited in the region to respond.

MISSING PERSON

¶4. (SBU) Gordon and King-Rousseau inquired about an official with the GOTT Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) who has been missing since the earthquake. Gregory McAlpin was in Port au Prince for a meeting of the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA) and was staying at the Hotel Montana on January 12. The Foreign Minister had previously notified the Charge of McAlpin, and the Charge forwarded that information to the Haiti Task Force on January 16.

COORDINATING REBUILDING PRIORITIES

¶5. (SBU) We shared with our MFA counterparts that two Locally Engaged Staff (LES) volunteers from our Embassy were dispatched to Haiti and Santo Domingo to assist with relief efforts. The MFA directors made note and also expressed their appreciation for our effort to keep them informed. Multilateral Affairs Director King-Rousseau noted that the GOTT, vice CARICOM, would like to coordinate with the USG regarding mid and long-term rebuilding priorities discussed by the Friends group in Santo Domingo earlier in the week.
Mazer